

U.S. Embassy Dakar, Senegal

Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens--Security Precautions during the Holidays

October 31, 2011

The U.S. Embassy encourages U.S. citizens in Senegal to practice good security habits during all holidays. An increase in crime usually coincides with the various holiday seasons. Crimes of opportunity such as pick-pocketing, purse snatching, thefts from vehicles, snatch and grab, etc., are more common.

U.S. citizens should practice good security habits at home and on the streets. Lock up cash, jewelry and other valuables at home, and use home security alarms if you have them. Avoid carrying valuables in public and be alert to the possibility of street crime. In a notice disseminated to Embassy personnel, the Embassy's Regional Security Office recommended the following steps that will help increase your personal security:

- In Dakar, do not walk along the Corniche during hours of darkness and be cautious in other areas when visibility is diminished.
- Remain aware of your surroundings at home, in your car, and when walking in public places.
- Refrain from carrying purses or backpacks that may attract unwanted attention; do not carry excessive amounts of cash or flaunt expensive accessories.
- Maintain a low profile and do not engage in activities that may draw extra attention to yourself.
- Travel in groups if at all possible, plan ahead of time and know how to reach your destination without getting lost.
- Give preference to well-lit establishments that offer a security presence.

Take appropriate safety precautions, including maintaining good situational awareness, avoiding crowds and demonstrations, monitoring local news outlets and reviewing emergency procedures, travel documents, and contingency plans.

You can stay in touch and get Embassy updates by checking the U.S. Embassy Dakar website (<http://dakar.usembassy.gov/>). You can also get global updates at the U.S. Department of State's, Bureau of Consular Affairs website where you can find the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warning, Travel Alerts, and Country Specific Information (http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1013.html). If you don't have internet access, you can get current information on safety and security by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States, or for callers from other countries, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

If you are going to live in or travel to Senegal or Guinea-Bissau, please take the time to tell us about your trip by enrolling in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP - <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>). If you enroll, we can keep you up to date with important safety and security announcements. It will also help your friends and family get in touch with you in an emergency. You should remember to keep all of your information in STEP up to date. It is important during enrollment or updating of information to include your current phone number and current email address where you can be reached in case of an emergency.

The U.S. Embassy in Dakar is located on Avenue Jean XXIII, Dakar; the mailing address is B.P. 49, Dakar, Senegal. If you have questions or concerns about safety or related issues, you are encouraged to contact the consular section at the Embassy by sending an email message to consulardakar@state.gov. The Embassy telephone number is +221 33 829-2100.

For After Hours Emergency, please call Tel: 33-829-2209 and ask to speak to the duty officer.